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Admiral Inman Likely to Get No. 2 CIA Post

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Vice-Admiral Bobby Ray Inman is expected to be named deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency by President-elect Ronald Reagan, according to well-informed sources in the transition process.

The 49-year-old naval officer has been director of the super-secret National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Md., since 1977. Transition sources said Inman was at the top of the list for taking over as deputy to director-designate William J. Casey because Inman's talents would complement those of the 67-year-old director.

Casey is a respected political strategist who took over as Reagan's campaign manager on the eve of the New Hampshire primary and had a successful career as an OSS operator during World War II. But Casey is said, even by his friends, to be somewhat disorganized when it comes to details, occasionally forgetful and out of touch with modern intelligence techniques.

In addition, the CIA tradition is that when the director of the agency is a civilian, the deputy's spot goes to a military man. Outgoing director Stansfield Turner is a Navy admiral and his departing deputy, Frank Carlucci, is a civilian.

The Reagan talent hunters have been looking for someone organized, articulate and current in

present-day intelligence craft and technology to install as Deputy CIA Director under Casey. While Inman's nomination is not final, several sources consider him to be a runaway leader for the post.

Inman, a native of Rhonesboro, Texas, entered the Navy after graduation from the University of Texas in 1950. Although not a graduate of the Naval Academy, he did graduate from the prestigious National War College here in the 1972 class.

He became an ensign in 1952 and advanced through all the officer ranks until his promotion to Vice Admiral in 1976. In his career, Inman has served as assistant naval attache in Stockholm, Sweden, a key listening post for events in the Soviet Union. He also was assistant chief of staff for intelligence under the commander of the Pacific Fleet from 1973 and 1974.

For the following two years, Inman was director of the Office of Naval Intelligence in Washington. He was vice director of the Defense Intelligence Agency from 1976 to 1977 when he was named head of the NSA.

The National Security Agency has the task of listening in electronically on all world communications and has the major role in U.S. efforts to break other nations' codes.